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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/583,550	05/21/2007	Giovanni Stefani	292784US6PCT	9838
22850	7590	12/19/2008	EXAMINER	
OBLON, SPIVAK, MCCLELLAND MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C. 1940 DUKE STREET ALEXANDRIA, VA 22314			MURPHY, TIMOTHY J	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			3656	
			NOTIFICATION DATE	DELIVERY MODE
			12/19/2008	ELECTRONIC

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Notice of the Office communication was sent electronically on above-indicated "Notification Date" to the following e-mail address(es):

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Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/583,550	STEFANI, GIOVANNI	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Timothy J. Murphy	3656	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 21 May 2007.
 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 18-34 is/are pending in the application.
 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
 6) Claim(s) 18-24, 26, 30-34 is/are rejected.
 7) Claim(s) 25, 27-29 is/are objected to.
 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
 10) The drawing(s) filed on 19 June 2006 is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ . |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>9/27/2006</u> . | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ . |

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

1. **Claims 18-19, 30-34 are rejected** under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Brock (USPN 6,443,028).

Regarding claim 18, Brock discloses an adjustable set of pedals for a motor vehicle, comprising:

- a first pedal (36 and 38; fig 1) for braking of the motor vehicle;
- a second pedal (31; 34; fig 1) for acceleration of the motor vehicle;
- means for supporting the first and second pedals (cradle 12); and
- an adjustment device (fig 2 and fig 8) for controlling selectively the position of the supporting means with respect to a frame of the motor vehicle and comprising a crank mechanism (rear portion 33, guide slot 114, pin 116; fig 7-8) set between the supporting means and the frame (fig 8);
- the adjustment device comprising:
 - a first guide (ball screw 48 and nut 50) extending in a first direction (along 48) and supporting the supporting means (via ear 24) which are mobile along the first guide; and

- a control rod (second ball screw 46) parallel to the first direction, slidably engaged through the first pedal (via brake nut 42), and connectable with the first pedal for actuating a braking device of the motor vehicle (via brake booster push rod 58).

Regarding claim 19, Brock discloses the adjustable set of pedals according to Claim 18, wherein the first guide comprises a first screw mounted to rotate about a first longitudinal axis (screw 48 is mounted to rotate about its axis); the supporting means being coupled to the first screw via a first external-thread/internal-thread coupling (nut 50).

Regarding claim 30, Brock discloses the adjustable set of pedals according to Claim 18, wherein the first direction is a substantially rectilinear direction (fig 1; motion is rectilinear with respect to the arrangement of the support means).

Regarding claim 31, Brock discloses the adjustable set of pedals according to Claim 18, wherein the first pedal is coupled to the control rod via a second external-thread/internal-thread coupling (nut 44; fig 1).

Regarding claim 32, Brock discloses the adjustable set of pedals according to Claim 18, wherein the first pedal is hinged to the supporting means for oscillating about a second axis of fulcrum (26; fig 2), and the second pedal is hinged to the supporting means for oscillating, with respect to the supporting means, about a fourth axis of fulcrum (between 31 and 30, throttle arm 31 is pivotally mounted to ETC 30 which is connected to support means; fig 2; col. 2, ll. 23-26) parallel to the second axis of fulcrum (fig 2).

Regarding claim 33, Brock discloses the adjustable set of pedals according to Claim 32, wherein the first pedal is further hinged in a position corresponding to an intermediate point

thereof, to a sleeve (nut 44) slidable along the control rod for oscillating (fig 6), with respect to the sleeve, about a fifth axis of fulcrum (nut pivot opening 40; fig 6) substantially parallel to the second axis of fulcrum.

Regarding claim 34, Brock discloses the adjustable set of pedals according to Claim 33, wherein the sleeve is coupled in an axially slidable manner (fig 6) to the control rod to perform rectilinear displacements along the control rod (with respect to pedals and support means), and is connectable to the control rod to impart on the control rod, following upon oscillation of the first pedal about the second axis of fulcrum, rectilinear displacements so as to control selectively operation of a braking device (col. 4, ll. 20-25, “Application of force to brake pedal pad 38 will necessarily transfer force to brake booster push rod 58 through brake nut 44, second ball screw 46, second ball screw hub 62, and push rod pivot pin 60.”).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

2. **Claim 20-22 are rejected** under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Brock in view of Redding et al (USPN 5,460,061).

Regarding claim 20, Brock discloses the adjustable set of pedals according to Claim 18, except for including wherein the adjustment device further comprises a second guide extending

in a second direction substantially transverse to the first direction; and a slide, mounted to slide along the second guide under action of thrust of the crank mechanism.

Redding teaches:

- a second guide (slot 18e; fig 2) extending in a second direction substantially transverse to a first direction (along 24; fig 2); and
- a slide (pin in slot 18e; fig 2), mounted to slide along the second guide under action of thrust of a crank mechanism (cam 22 and link 24; fig 2) for the purpose of selectively adjusting the pivot axis of the support, thus increasing range of pedal positions for the user.

Accordingly, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time which the invention was made to modify Brock to include wherein the adjustment device further comprises a second guide extending in a second direction substantially transverse to the first direction; and a slide, mounted to slide along the second guide under action of thrust of the crank mechanism, as taught by Brock, for the purpose of selectively adjusting the pivot axis of the support, thus increasing range of pedal positions for the user.

Regarding claim 21, Brock as currently modified by Redding discloses the adjustable set of pedals according to Claim 20, wherein the crank mechanism comprises:

- a connecting rod (link 24 of Redding) set between the supporting means (bracket 16 of Redding) and the slide (pin in slot 18e of Redding);
- and a crank (cam 22) set between the frame and the connecting rod (fig 2).

Regarding claim 22, Brock as modified by Redding discloses the adjustable set of pedals according to Claim 20, wherein the supporting means is mobile under action of thrust of the

crank mechanism between a first end position and a second end position (Brock's supporting means are mobile, as modified by Redding, under the regulation of Redding's crank mechanism between a first end position and a second end position corresponding to the extreme ends of the ball screw of Brock; **see MPEP 2114** – “...while features of an apparatus may be recited either structurally or functionally, claims directed to an apparatus must be distinguished in terms from the prior art in terms of structure rather than function...”); and

thrust means (motor 70; fig 6 of Brock) are provided for displacing the supporting means into, and normally maintaining the supporting means in, one of the first and second end positions (motor 70 rotates ball screws 46 and 48).

3. **Claim 23 is rejected** under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Brock in view of Redding as applied to claim 22 above, and further in view of Muller (USPN 5,896,781).

Regarding claim 23, Brock as modified discloses the adjustable set of pedals according to Claim 22, except for wherein the thrust means include elastic thrust means set between the slide and the crank mechanism.

Redding teaches a thrust means (transmission member 42) that is set between the slide (30) and the crank mechanism (22) for the purpose of increasing assembly ease.

Accordingly, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time which the invention was made to further modify Brock to include wherein thrust means (transmission member 42) are set between the slide (30) and the crank mechanism, as taught by Redding, for the purpose of increasing assembly ease.

Muller teaches elastic thrust means (spring 16; fig 2) for the purpose of assisting motion of element thus reducing strain on the transmission member.

Accordingly, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time which the invention was made to modify further Brock to include elastic thrust means, as taught by Muller, for the purpose of assisting motion of element thus reducing strain on the transmission member.

4. **Claims 24 and 26 are rejected** under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Brock in view of Kiczek (USPN 7,111,524).

Regarding claim 24, Brock discloses the adjustable set of pedals according to Claim 18, except for including wherein the adjustment device further comprises: first clamping means for blocking the supporting means along the first guide; and a first actuator device for actuating the first clamping means between a first position of clamping of the supporting means along the first guide and a first position of release.

Kiczek teaches clamping means (tooth 53 and gear 54; fig 2) for blocking supporting means (pin 36) along a guide (slot 20); and an actuator device (lever 84, cable 64; fig 5) for actuating the clamping means between a position of clamping of the supporting means along the guide and a position of release (fig 2; col. 2, ll. 11-25) for the purpose of allowing the user a convenient means to secure the pedals in place.

Accordingly, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time which the invention was made to modify Brock to include wherein the adjustment device further comprises: first clamping means for blocking the supporting means along the first guide;

and a first actuator device for actuating the first clamping means between a first position of clamping of the supporting means along the first guide and a first position of release, as taught by Kiczek, for the purpose of allowing the user a convenient means to initiate pedal adjustment.

Regarding claim 26, Brock as modified discloses the adjustable set of pedals according to Claim 24 except for including: second clamping means for blocking the first pedal along the control rod; and a second actuator device to actuate the second clamping means between a second position of clamping of the first pedal along the control rod and a second position of release.

Kiczek teaches clamping means (tooth 53 and gear 54; fig 2) for blocking a pedal (pin 36) along a rod (gear sector 54); and an actuator device (lever 84, cable 64; fig 5) for actuating the clamping means between a position of clamping of the pedal along the rod and a position of release (fig 2; col. 2, ll. 11-25) for the purpose of allowing the user a convenient means to secure the pedals in place.

Accordingly, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time which the invention was made to further modify Brock to include second clamping means for blocking the first pedal along the control rod; and a second actuator device to actuate the second clamping means between a second position of clamping of the first pedal along the control rod and a second position of release, as taught by Kiczek, for the purpose of allowing the user a convenient means to initiate pedal adjustment.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 25 and 27-29 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Timothy J. Murphy whose telephone number is (571)270-7021. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon - Fri, 10 AM - 4 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Richard W. Ridley can be reached on (571)272-6917. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Timothy J Murphy/
Examiner, Art Unit 3656
/Richard WL Ridley/

10 December 2008

Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 3656